

of all to me remains this gift of poetry—such
that even in
the midst of some passage when he seems
like a bitter
withering wind blowing on the flowers of a
chateau-
garden, the grey heavens will suddenly
open and an
unlooked-for shaft of sunlight turn his
world to a dance
of living green and gold again. Of all his
principles none
seems to me so true as this insistence on
die power, and
the need, of imagination to give life to life;
as when,
dining at Rivebelle, he suddenly sees the
restaurant as a
fantastic mediaeval universe where the
tables are planets,
and the waiters heavenly bodies, and the
caissieres witches
whose astrological calculations are busy
keeping all these
stars in their courses; and pities the diners
who, instead
of this beatific vision, are thinking of their
bills. *De
quelle morne ennui est empreinte la vie des
gens qui, par
paresse ou timidite, se rendent
directement en voiture
chez des amis qu'ils ont connus, sans avoir
d'abord reve
d'eux, sans jamais oser sur le parcours
s'arreter aupres de ce
qu'ils desirent!' There, surely, he lays his
finger on the
disease of our age, which will soon be too
hurried to
dream at all, except for the purpose of being
analysed out
of the neuroses its own frenzied haste
engenders; and soon
fly so fast as to leave behind, not only the
waves of sound,
but poetry itself. That seems to me the
essential wisdom
of Proust, among other things in him that
are hardly
sane. Had he only been able to keep his

poetic imagination
tion more living still, he would not, perhaps,
have needed
distance or misery to keep love alive in him;
nor have seen
only dull prose in whatever his hands could
embrace.

Perhaps this failure was partly because he
neglected so
the other half of life—the physical half that
obsessed D. H.
Lawrence, just as Proust was obsessed by
the analysing
intellect. Had health not been denied him,
had he kept
more sanity about the physical side of
existence, he might